BOWSER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

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Approved by:

Date:

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Date:

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BOWSER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key role of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Bowser Ecological Reserve is to protect a highly productive forest ecosystem and wetland comprised of swamps and ponds. The forested portion of the site is transitional between the Coastal Douglas-fir (CDFmm) and Coastal Western Hemlock (CWHxm) biogeoclimatic zones. The rich colluvial soil supports a Douglas-fir forest established 100 years ago after fire that has grown into very large specimens despite their age with the potential to become record-size trees. The ecological reserve protects two red-listed rare plant communities (grand fir -- dull Oregon grape and western redcedar -- vanilla leaf) and a high diversity of dragonflies including some regionally rare species that are restricted to specific types of peatland habitats.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role is to represent the natural environment of the southeastern coast of Vancouver Island. Located 18 kilometres north of Parksville, this high quality Douglas-fir growing site contributes to the representation of the Nanaimo Lowland Ecosection and the Coastal Western Hemlock xm1 biogeoclimatic variant. Both of these land units are highly impacted and under represented in the protected areas system, and Bowser Ecological Reserve has a remnant value in protecting these ecosystems.

Tertiary Role
The **tertiary** role is to provide opportunities for non-destructive forest research. Unique opportunities exist to research a highly productive forest ecosystem, a high diversity of dragonflies, and plant communities that are rare on southeastern Vancouver Island.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of natural and cultural values	➢ Enhance knowledge of rare elements by conducting an ecological inventory. ➢ Undertake cultural inventory and traditional use study in conjunction with First Nations.
Adjacency land use (i.e. forest harvesting/ road development) could impact the natural values	➢ Work with Ministry of Forests, Highways and adjacent property managers to ensure ecological reserve values are taken into consideration during development.
Uncontrolled public access poses fire, dumping, forest damage and pollution problems	➢ Work with volunteer warden to establish a formal monitoring program. ➢ Increase awareness through interpretation, information, boundary markers, etc. ➢ Post a sign informing people of ecological reserve

	designation and solicit public cooperation for no dumping, camping, campfires and hunting. ➢ Consult with Ministry of Forests regarding application of outstanding silvicultural prescription; when complete close road to access.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Contributes 2.3% to the overall protected area representation of the Nanaimo Lowlands Ecosection (NAL), which is poorly represented in the protected areas system at 1.4%. 35 small protected areas contribute to the representation of NAL.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Contributes 1.3% to the overall protected area representation of CWHxm1, which is poorly represented in the protected areas system at 2%. 51 small protected areas contribute to its representation.
Special Features	☒	Highly productive Douglas-fir site; dragonflies; plant communities
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Red-listed plant communities: grand fir -- dull Oregon grape; western redcedar -- vanilla leaf.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Forest research opportunities: highly productive forest ecosystem; plant communities; dragonflies

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☐	Not Applicable
travel corridor	☐	Not Applicable
local recreation	☐	Not Applicable
Special Opportunities	☐	Not Applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☐	None known at this time

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values unknown
Special Feature	☐	None known at this time

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of ecological reserves on Vancouver Island
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable

Partnerships	☒	Volunteer ecological reserve warden
Vulnerability	☒	Remnant value is vulnerable to adjacent land issues and inappropriate public use
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Created as a result of recommendations made in the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan Goal 2 process

Area: 116 hectares

Date of establishment: April 30, 1996